

**Rep. Joseph R. Pitts**  
**Opening Statement**  
**Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health**  
**Hearing on “A Financial Review of the Department of Health and Human**  
**Services and Its FY 2014 Budget”**  
**April 18, 2013**

The subcommittee will come to order.

The Chair will recognize himself for an opening statement.

First, I would like to thank Secretary Sebelius for appearing before the Subcommittee to discuss the Administration’s FY2014 budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services.

While the budget request is 65 days late, and both the House and Senate have already passed their respective budget resolutions, it is still important that the country know what the Administration’s priorities are for the upcoming fiscal year.

As implementation of the Affordable Care Act is now a major item in the President’s request, this hearing will allow Members to ask the Secretary questions about the law on behalf of our constituents.

The law is simply not working as advertised. It was sold to the American people as a job creator. The administration put forward an estimate that 4 million jobs would be created.

Instead, red tape and a new employer mandate are discouraging companies from creating new full time jobs. In many instances, workers are seeing their hours cut to part-time or only finding part-time jobs available.

Even the Federal Reserve has noted that the uncertainty being created by the law is holding back hiring. I have personally heard from constituents who have been harmed by the mandate.

When the government makes it more expensive and more complex to hire workers, companies will hold back on hiring. That’s just a simple economic principle. However, that doesn’t seem to matter with government regulators.

The law was sold as saving the American people money. Yet today, wherever I go, I hear from individuals and businesses facing insurance premiums that are growing by double digits.

Now, you may claim this is because everyone is going to have gold standard, government-approved insurance. The American people were told by the President that each family would save \$2,500 a year. That wasn't a promise that came with a caveat. In fact, that promise was made with a deadline, that it would happen in the first term. That first term is over, and the non-partisan Politifact rates that as a broken promise.

Businesses and individuals are seeing their premiums rise as a direct result of the law.

I know that some may shake their heads and wonder why Republicans don't just move along and learn to tolerate the ACA.

- We should not tolerate a government law that makes it harder for our constituents to find and keep a full-time job.
- Congress should not tolerate regulations that drive up costs for struggling businesses.
- Finally, we should not stand by and watch Americans with pre-existing conditions be left out of the plan that was intended to give them coverage.

I will continue to look for ways to make health care more affordable, more accessible, and simpler for the American people. While it would be best if we could start by repealing the ACA, that law will not stop me and my colleagues from proposing constructive health care reforms.

Madam Secretary, we hope that you will stay in order to answer all of our questions, and, with only five minutes of questions per Member, we ask that you keep your answers concise and to the point.

The constituents we hear from every day, including those who are able to be here in the audience today, deserve answers.

Thank you, and I yield back. The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member, Mr. Pallone, for five minutes for his opening statement.

Thank you. The Chair now recognizes the Chairman of the full Committee, the gentleman from Michigan, Chairman Upton for five minutes for his opening statement.

Thank you. The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member of the full Committee, Mr. Waxman for five minutes for his opening statement.